1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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owned twenty-five indigo trees had to take their produce to Ilorin market just at the time of the second yam harvest. However, they preferred to sell indigo first and to postpone the digging out of yam for a month or two, although this meant losing the always profitable market for the first yams of the season. The element of economic calculation, to which we have already assigned its place in the planning of Nupe agriculture, reveals its efficacy in this new context as well.

Not much need be said about the other fruit-bearing trees. The fruit of the mango tree is eaten when and wherever it can be picked or gathered up from the ground; it is not traded—like the banana it is 'just fruit'. The tender young leaves of the baobab (*muci*) are used as food; they are pounded and sold in the markets as a vegetable which is added to soup and meat. In order to obtain the tender leaves the owner of the tree lops the big branches so as to make them sprout new leaves. The cotton-wool-like kapok which is contained in the capsules of the silk-cotton tree (*lembubu*) is traded in one or two markets of the country; it is bought by the Bida cushion-makers and also by the canoe-men on the Niger, who use its fine fibres to stop leaks in their canoes. The commercial use of this tree and its fruits has not yet penetrated into the more remote districts: while in Kutigi, on the main road, natives were collecting kapok to sell it to the Bida cushion-makers, I found in Sakpe, only ten miles away but right in the bush, the cotton-wool left unused, lying on the ground to be carried away by the wind. When I asked a number of men why they did not collect it and take it to the market—I could call upon a boy from Bida whom I had with me to bear out my contention that this stuff possessed commercial value—they replied, not wholly convinced, that it would be too hard work. Another example of rudimentary 'economic calculation', with leisure weighed against money-profit.

INNOVATIONS IN PRODUCTION

From this discussion an interesting question arises: why have the Nupe, who have mastered the cultivation of kola-nut and banana, not taken to the cultivation of other trees as well, but left most of their fruit-bearing trees to the 'care of God'. If you ask a Nupe farmer he will give you one of two answers: either the vague theological excuse that God has planted the trees, and that God will look after them; or the more rationalistic but no less acquiescent explanation: 'If I planted a tree I should never see its fruit, only my grandchildren would profit by it. Our grandfathers have not planted trees for us, why then should we plant for our grandchildren?' The fact, well known to everyone, that the Kusopa plant and cultivate trees is yet easily dismissed. This is one of the cultural features typical of certain tribal sections which are simply taken for granted by the other groups. The myth that explains how it came about that just this and no other sub-tribe happened to become kola-nut planters, the special magic which the members of that sub-tribe are believed to own provide the spiritual background for this attitude. This acceptance of an existing productive specialization as if it were a final and unalterable fact was effective enough, as we have seen,